

ISSUE

COSMIC

SPECIAL

POOM

NUMBER NINE



WELCOME TO THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF CO\$MICS

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You should have known that the instant you set eyes on the spectacular Judo Jim Starlin cover (unless you're the type of fan who instantly rushes to the FOOM editorial before glomming the unbelievable cover art). We have a plethora of amazing articles wittily written by Marvel-dom's top talent.

Roger Stern, author of the Silver Surfer, Watcher, and Captain Marvel sagas in these pulse-pounding pages has sent us his own bombastic bio, which we present forthwith:

Roger Stern leads a double life. By day he's the Traffic-&Continuity Director (that means he writes and schedules commercials) for WXLW-Radio in Indianapolis. But by night he changes into a fanatical, if somewhat furry, comic book freak! Sternal... as he is sometimes called... was instrumental in starting that far-famed college course *The Comic Book in Society* during his more foot-loose days at Indiana University. Rog is also the writer of that worst-selling comedy single "An American's View of Canada", the less said about the better. Presently he's dividing what he laughingly refers to as his spare time between editing his own fanzine (the very fine *C.P.L.* (which by the way costs only 60¢ postpaid from 4010 Mallway Drive, Apt. A, Indianapolis, IN 46236...and it makes for great reading while you're waiting for your

next issue of FOOM!) seeing to the maintenance and upkeep on his life-size replica of Froggy the Gremlin, and... what else... writing for his fellow maniacs here at F.O.O.M. Central! Our hats are off to ya, Sternal! Now if you'd just stop baying at the moon!

That's enough of *That*, Sternal!

But now it's resolution time for those of you who have been daring enough to enter our FOOM contests. Dauntless Don McGregor, having as of January 30, 1975 left his job as editor of the black-and-whites (being replaced by the ever-able Archie Goodwin), has finally had time to sit down and judge "WRITE THIS PAGE." The first prize of Don's script, plot, and a stat of the page with the winners script lettered in, will go to Mary Santoro of Watertown, Mass. and will be presented in the pages of FOOM next issue. Robert Ingersoll of Chagrin Falls, Ohio, and Ralph Macchio of Creskill, New Jersey have also won themselves a stat of the page with *their* scripts lettered in. All of this lascivious lettering will be done by none other than terrible Tom Orzechowski, pride of the Bullpen.

PLUS: For those of you who have read last issues' editorial announcing the winners of Marvel Models, and have been wondering what has taken us so long to *compile* the furslugginer thing, we present the following:

- 1) IRON MAN
- 2) THOR
- 3) THING
- 4) DAREDEVIL
- 5) SILVER SURFER
- 6) VISION
- 7) CONAN
- 8) FANTASTIC FOUR
- 9) DOC STRANGE
HUMAN TORCH
MASTER OF KUNG FU
- 10) SUB-MARINER
DEATHLOK

There are many more, but we only have room to include the top ten. We are anxiously awaiting word from Aurora as to what they plan doing after carefully considering the above computations.

By the time you read these words, Marvel Con will be long gone. But if you failed to attend, don't miss FOOM #10, where we will present complete coverage of the most captivating comic convention of all time.

PLUS: The lead feature for that issue will be those magnificent mutants—those titanic teens—those scintillating super-students—the uncanny X-men!

So don't miss the next go around, Pilgrims! We'll be waiting for ya!

—SCOTT EDELMAN





by Roger Stern

There are those who will tell you that the universe is infinite...that it extends on beyond all mortal or temporal concepts of time and space to eternity and beyond. Others will insist that the universe is all too finite, but of a finity that reaches to extremes that become meaningless to normal human understanding. And still others theorize that the universe is all

but a tiny part of a monstrously immense molecular structure composing a mere dust mote upon the edge of a gigantic bookshelf in some macroverse existing beyond our senses.

These are all theories beyond testing. All that really matters is that the universe is...it exists. That should be enough to occupy the day-to-day thoughts of those of us not in abstract physics and such. For it is in existence alone that the universe is beyond most human...and most humanoid...understanding. Even to those races who have unlocked the secrets of intergalactic travel, the true understanding of the universe is denied. No, only those few beings who have totally experienced the cosmos...those who have, however reluctantly, rejected the planetary for the cosmic...have the barest glimmerings of the riddle behind that vast expanse of the void.

(In truth, there are entities who

hold the riddle of the cosmic all, but entity is really the only classification under which they can be considered. They are cosmically-sentient portions of this dimension or others and can not really be tackled in this discourse. We shall, therefore, concern ourselves only with human, humanoid, and quasi-human beings.)

Well, then, if a cosmic existence is so far removed from our realm of comprehension, why concern ourselves with it at all?

Well, curiosity, and just plain old human cussedness for one thing. But other than that, it may well be that a thorough investigation could reveal why our little orb has become such a cosmic jumping-off spot in recent times. Perhaps it is some fantastically funny, cosmic joke which we don't get. Perhaps our little Terra is actually an instrumental cog in the workings of the universe...a key space on the cosmic checkerboard. Be that as it may, there have been cosmic legends that have walked this Earth!

For there are those beings whose names are whispered with awe in the farthest corners of the many galaxies...beings who have transcended the barriers of time and space. They have witnessed the birth of whole planetary systems...and the death of stars. They are in short,

citizens of the cosmos.

Such are Galactus and his once-herald, the Silver Surfer!

The Silver Surfer and Galactus! Herald and master! Beings of a nobility beside which the knights of Arthurian mythos dwindle to insignificance.

Consider Galactus. Galactus, the last son of Taa...a race already ancient when our sun was yet aborning. The Taa, mighty as they were, could not survive the space-spawned plague that invaded their planet. And save for one, an entire race died as in the wink of an eye.

man of Zenn-La, one of the most blessed worlds in the field of space. To some it might have seemed the perfect existence...war, disease, want, all were eradicated. The people of Zenn-La were free to pursue lives of leisure. Zenn-La was a paradise come true. But not for Norrin Radd. Where others saw perfection, he saw stagnation...a people who had reached a dead end. There was no adventure, no excitement in life for Norrin. There were no challenges. Everything had been achieved. And Norrin Radd was sorely troubled. He could find no satisfaction in a perfect

Norrin saw his chance and took it. And things were never quite the same again.

He struck a bargain. If Galactus would spare Zenn-La, Norrin Radd would become his herald, seeking out worlds for the master, finding food. Galactus accepted and Norrin Radd was transformed....transformed into a being not quite human, and yet so much more...the Silver Surfer.

And as the Silver Surfer, he lost his humanity.

Again, put yourself in his place. You are changed. In place of skin



That lone survivor, he who was to be Galactus, survived the damning plague and the transforming radiation of a raging star...survived to become a planetary parasite, a kind of intergalactic Euell Gibbons ("Ever eat a planet? Some parts are edible!")...survived to become Galactus! Can there truly be another as alone as he?

Yes.

Galactus has had countless millennia to adjust to his situation. He is Galactus, and that in itself seemed to suffice.

But what of the Surfer? What of Norrin Radd, the being inside?

One might almost say that Norrin Radd was always alone. He was a

world if he had merely inherited it. Even the love of Shalla Bal could not put his soul to rest.

Then, as they say in the comics, came Galactus.

Put yourself in Norrin's place. You face a lifetime of cosmic boredom. Suddenly the greatest menace in all the cosmos threatens the very existence of your world. If something is not done, all will die. And you have the chance to do something. Do you do it? You do.

And he did. And so, found himself faced with a being as far removed from him as he from the frog. Galactus! But a weary Galactus. A being tired of chasing across the galaxies in search of sustenance.

you have a cosmic glaze. You are impervious to all of the so-called normal types of harm. Neither the impossible cold of the void, nor the nuclear fires of the supernova have any meaning for you. Instead, they are merely phenomena that you contemplate. And as you consider your new-found environment...as you travel the incredible distances of space...your mind fades to the old life.

Such must have been the case with the Silver Surfer! Somewhere out amidst the vastness of the universe, the being who had been Norrin Radd lost his humanity. His psyche altered, expanding to take in the seemingly infinite void, adapting to

and discovering the extents of the power cosmic. Understand, there are no words in our drab little language that can begin to convey the numbing, mind-boggling effects of transversing a cosmos in which time and space dwindle to meaningless abstractions.

And so, when the Silver Surfer first observed the earth, he was no longer the concerned rebel of Zenn-La. He was, quite simply, the Silver Surfer, a timeless being from the stars. How long had it been since he had been amongst a society...of any kind? It's impossible to say,

from the fist of Ben Grimm knocked the Surfer from the Baxter Building, stunning him so that an ever-twisting fate might bring him to the studio of Alicia Masters.

The Surfer who fell through the skylight of Alicia's studio was a cold being. His life on Zenn-La forgotten, he had become totally alienated from the realities of human life. He had actually forgotten what it was like to eat! It was as if he were some grotesque parody of a man...a parody with the power to level a world. But under the hyper-sensitive influence of Alicia Masters and

took up the cause of these mere humans. And, eventually Galactus was met with defeat. The earth was saved...but at a dear price for the Surfer. As a parting gesture, Galactus altered his space/time abilities, causing a barrier to imprison the sky-rider on this world.

Trapped as he was, the Surfer set out to survey his new home. How many times he criss-crossed the globe we may never know. He was like a child in those days. His emotions tended towards the abstract, and he had difficulty in assimilating the madness and diversities of the



especially when one considers how his space/time powers could compress a lifetime's travel into the space of a thought. Suffice it to say that the sighting of Terra meant only one thing to the Surfer...food for the master!

Sometimes we poor mortals get lucky. Luck was certainly with us when the Silver Surfer touched down! Yes, lucky...because that intrepid band of adventurers, the Fantastic Four, had been warned of his coming by an even more cosmic being, the Watcher. Lucky...even as the Surfer coldly summoned Galactus to earth, visiting certain doom upon three billion beings. Lucky...because a sweeping punch

through proximity observation of Manhattan's populace, a remote corner of his mind opened up. And for the first time since leaving Zenn-La, the Surfer felt emotion.

That afternoon the Silver Surfer entered the first phase of a soul-shaking psychological journey. While his memory was still locked away, his emotional ego had re-awakened. He was becoming aware of his quasi-human existence, and thus of the right of Earth's inhabitants to resist the gastronomic pursuits of Galactus. It was the beginning of a long process, this re-awakening. And it led to an end that would forever change his life.

The Surfer turned on his master,

world's societies. He had much to learn, this silver-skinned alien, and experience became a most ruthless teacher. Traveling on the outskirts of Latveria, he fell prey to the megalomania of Victor Von Doom.

The experience with Doom was a brutal one, for the Latverian monarch actually stole the Surfer's cosmic powers! The mighty Silver Surfer who had transversed galaxies on end...who had been a legend of deep space...laid weak and helpless in the tower room of an ancient castle. Finally, with the intervention of the Fantastic Four, he regained the power cosmic, and in the months that followed he continued his study of the human race, albeit with a bit

more caution.

What the Surfer saw of Earth saddened him. It saddened him with a sorrow that gave way first to mania and then to madness! If this humanity would not put down their

petty differences, he would force them to! He would give them a common enemy to fight! Then they would have to unite...or die! And that common enemy would be the Silver Surfer! It was a mad,

fool-hardy idea. And it was in vain.

The minds behind U.S. Army Ordinance had developed a neonic nuclear missile, largely based upon Reed Richards' Anti-Cosmic Flying Wing (see FF #60). This missile, the so-called Sonic Shark, was designed to siphon off the Surfer's power and explode. And that's exactly what it did. Only a last minute rescue by the Fantastic Four saved the Surfer's life. As it was, his powers were sharply reduced for a time.

(The power cosmic ever flows into those such as the Surfer. It might be some months before his powers were at their peak again, but it would not be forever!)

And with this temporary weakening, the mind and memories of Norrin Radd returned to the Surfer in full. Now he remembered who he was and what he had given up. He thought of his beloved Shalla Bal, so far removed on the planet Zenn-La. And now his anguish was doubled. He was denied both his lost love... and the freedom of the cosmos.

It was a most cosmic tragedy. Time and again he tried to breach the Galactan barrier. Time and again he failed. And so, with his idealistic memories back, he tried to adapt to Terran society. And here, too, he failed. For the Surfer was guilty of a terrible human sin...he was different.

Yet still, the Surfer was concerned enough to try and protect we weaker mortals from a score of dire and dreadful menaces. The Badoon, Loki, and the Stranger were but a few of the many menaces the Silver Surfer was able to thwart. And then there was that most ultimate of foes...Mephisto. He was unable to conquer the Surfer's soul, but he persists in periodically bedeviling it.

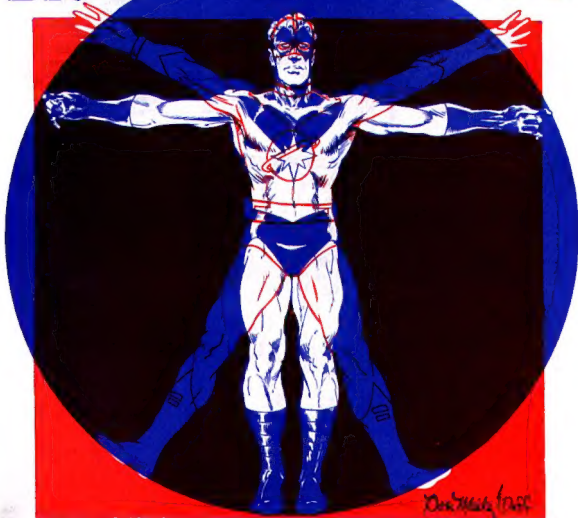
Even so, the Surfer has occasionally found a kind of fellowship in the company of beings such as the Defenders. But even an association with such a loosely-knit group of adventurers as they could only be temporary. And so, the Surfer generally flies the Terran skies alone.

And of late? Well, we've all seen the manipulations of Shalla Bal. What will follow is for the laughing fates to decide. In the meanwhile we can only ponder the sorry lot of the Silver Surfer, a child of the cosmos plagued by the memories of the man he once was...and the being he is.



by Roger Stern

BRAVEST MAN IN THE



LAND OF THE KREE

When one thinks of the cosmos, and of the beings that roam it, one usually thinks either in terms of quasi-immortals such as the Watcher, Galactus, or the Surfer...or in terms of the fledgling space travelers such as the Aakon, the Kree, the

Skrulls, or the Badoon. Yet there is another category. It is composed of one lone being, a being who is of both groups and neither. We call him Captain Marvel!

Captain Marvel...or perhaps more properly Captain Mar-vell...is the former Kree soldier who became

a most unique chessman on the intergalactic gameboard. There was a time...but recently, in fact...when Mar-vell was nothing more than an extremely capable Kree warrior. Legion were the tales of his battles prowess! Countless were the battles he had won for his star-span-



ning empire! Were it not for the ever-twisting helix of fate, Mar-vell might still be a loyal soldier in the service of the Supreme Intelligence. Such, however, is not the case. As with most beings of the cosmos, our man Mar-vell has gone through his share of changes.

And it all began with a simple case of trespass.

An archeologist had found a clue that a Von Daniken would adore. That clue led him to a remote South Sea island and a long-abandoned Kree spaceport. Unfortunately, said spaceport contained one still-functional Sentry, and when that nameless archeologist and his strongarm started looking over the spaceport... well, you know the rest. Fortunately for the two hapless earthers, three members of the world's most famous foursome just happened to pick that island for their vacation. There was the inevitable battle, and for the first time ever a Sentry met defeat. And, since the Kree were not a race to take defeat lightly, Ronan the Accuser was dispatched post haste to teach the earthers a lesson. Ronan, however, was also trounced by the F.F.! It was at that point in time/space that the decision was made by the Kree hierarchy to place our little back-water planet under surveillance. And the first step of an incredibly-complex, cosmic intrigue began with Mar-vell as the main pawn.

We don't know what there was in

Mar-vell's background that made him take to the earthers. True, he seemed more humanitarian than many of his battle-hardened men. Perhaps there was something buried deep in that interstellar psyche that rebelled at the role of spy. And certainly the maniacal leadership of Yon-Rogg would cause any soldier to doubt his purpose. Be that as it may, Mar-vell's landing on earth marked the end of his shining military career, and started him on a road of unending change. The following months would see him as spy, superhero, traitor, outlaw, and champion. While he studied the earthers, he himself became a guinea pig. Mar-vell was used in a game of



intergalactic politics that reached from Earth to the home system of the Kree Empire, and conspiracy against the Supreme Intelligence was involved! Ultimately Mar-vell was instrumental in breaking the conspiracy. He was awarded special status, a new costume, and a permanent commission. So outfitted, he hurled himself towards Earth once more to seek out Yon-Rogg and implement his capture. But fate had another laugh to enjoy, and Mar-vell wound up in the Negative Zone. There he languished until the manipulations of the Supreme Intelligence effected a symbiotic existence between Mar-vell and the perennial sidekick, Rick Jones.

Unusual so far, right? Right!

But the changes still kept coming, unwinding like some complex Chinese puzzle. Rick/Marvel defeated Yon-Rogg most permanently. He/They even stopped the Hulk... no small chore... from ravaging a college campus. And finally, Mar-vell escaped the Negative Zone... just in time to face the outbreak of the Kree-Skrull War!

Epic poems will one day be written about that bold crusade where Avengers crossed the void to stop both Kree and Skrull... and where Rick Jones saved the universe! But when the smoke cleared, Mar-vell had once again merged with Rick, this time to save his life. The Kree captain was seemingly no more. But two photon bombardments and a pair of Nega-bands later and Captain Marvel was once more a symbiotic two-in-one with Rick Jones.

It would seem that major conflicts tend to follow Captain Marvel. First the conspiracy against the Supreme Intelligence, then the Kree-Skrull War, and then... Thanos!

Thanos of Titan, descendant of Olympian gods, and pretender to the throne of the universe! And he very nearly had his way. And, he possessed the mighty cosmic cube! It was starting to look like even Mar-vell and the Avengers were doomed.

And then along came Eon. And suddenly things became very, very cosmic!



Eon had been created eight billion years before to wait... to wait for the one warrior who could arise and save the universe... to wait for Captain Marvel! Before the interruption of Eon, Mar-vell had been a consummately-great soldier. He could organize, he could fight, and his knowledge of tactics and strategy knew no bounds. He was a very good man, but the false values of war were deeply ingrained in his character.

And those same skills that were his as a warrior could be his downfall. But Eon changed all that. The ancient entity pulled him to the very ends of the universe. Together they transcended ordinary concepts of dimension, time, and space. And at the outcome Captain Marvel was transformed. For perhaps the first time in all of eternity, a man became as one with the cosmos. Captain Marvel became aware!



Awareness! Will any of us ever be so blessed? To be aware...cosmically aware! To be in tune with the rhythm of the spheres...the rhyme of the stars! To fully know a situation...and so knowing, to act!

Once again there was change. But this was the greatest and grandest change of all! No longer was Mar-vell just a gaudy superhero. Now he was protector of the universe! Perhaps Iron Man put it best:

"Gone is the righteous and headstrong Kree warrior! Instead I see a calm and confident man...a man I'm almost in awe of—and I'm not sure why."

The new awareness, the subtle sharpening of the skills and sensitivities, turned the tide for Captain Marvel and company. Thanos was ultimately defeated. And Mar-vell/Rick went on to face another grave threat...that of the Lunatic Legion!

The saga of the Lunatic Legion and their strange involvement with the Watcher will continue to unfold in the days to come. But as it does, ponder this man, Captain Marvel. His being has been transformed. His previous exploits will be as nothing compared to the adventures that must surely follow. These are adventures that will traverse the void, writing new legends for the bards of space!

And that's pretty cosmic!

They Also Serve...

Tucked away in a remote little corner of our moon lies the mysterious "blue area". That small spot may one day yield untold knowledge to the people of Terra. In that small area of the moon there exists a breathable atmosphere,

shelter from the sun's ultraviolet rays, and a moderate exception to the sphere's usual extremes of temperature. Moreover, there lie the ruins of a city... the long abandoned Blue City, dating from the Kree Year One. Those ruins are an important

part of astrohistory for they mark both a major turning point in the advancement of the Kree, and the beginnings of the ages-old hatred between Kree and Skrull. But there are not only ruins on that spot. Oh, no. For at the edge of the remains of



Who Only Watch!

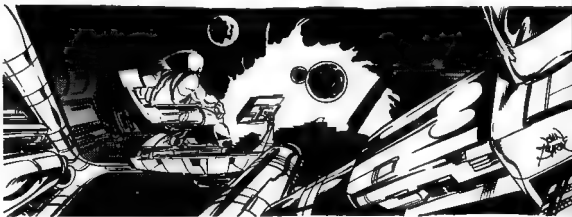
that fantastic Blue City is the retreat of the Watcher!

The Watcher... a member of one of the most ancient and long-lived races in our universe. A powerful being is the Watcher. Just how powerful we have no way of knowing. However, it is believed that he could, if he wished, rip an entire galaxy asunder. He has a knowledge that we could never attain, were we to live a thousand, thousand lifetimes. The Watcher has walked among the stars for untold eons. His concept of time is far-removed from our own. It is

his elders to try a bold new experiment. They traveled to the world of a less advanced race and gave them the secret of the atom. And the experiment was a failure. The little backwoods world made great advances with the new knowledge, but they also made mighty weapons. As a result, their world was nearly blown apart. The once-and-future Watcher learned the facts of man the hard way... that no good can come of granting knowledge if the wisdom to use it is not present.

And so, his race scattered to the

Molecule Man's power was so great that it might one day threaten the Watcher's own people. And yet, when Victor Von Doom stole the power cosmic from the Silver Surfer, surely a greater threat than M.M. had been, our eternal observer turned his back. Very strange. Or was it? Did the Watcher somehow know that Doom could be defeated? Perhaps his advanced logic is capable of reasoning when the human race needs his aid... and when it doesn't. Whatever the case, the Watcher most certainly works on



conceivable that when our little planet was being formed, he might have taken a few centuries to watch some of the continents take shape. And then, perhaps, his attention was drawn elsewhere in the void. When he returned... (to study the city? to merely catch up on the progress of the little star and its planets?)... there was man. And for some odd reason, the Watcher was intrigued. And though he might travel to the farthest corners of the universe, he keeps returning to our system to watch. To watch... and not to interfere!

It was not always thus. There was a moment in the relative youth of his race when our Watcher tried to help less enlightened peoples. He inspired

ends of the universe. They vowed to cause no interference in the workings of the cosmos, but to allow events to run their course, regardless of the consequences. His role became that of a cosmic observer... to watch, but not to act.

And yet he has acted.

For some reason the interstellar peeping-Tom has taken a shine to us earth-folk, and that has made all the difference. The Watcher has... if not broken... at least fudged on his cosmic vows. He has acted on occasion to render us aid. And the instances in which he has have been strange indeed. Case in point: the Watcher first stepped in on our world when the Molecule Man threatened. He explained that the

a mysterious level... especially of late!

Until recently, the Watcher has broken or bent his vows of non-interference only in the most passive of ways. He has supplied important information or warnings, or he has removed already-defeated foes from our planetary vicinity. Yet of late he has seemingly allied himself with a group of crazed villains for no other apparent reason than the elimination of Captain Marvel! What can be the purpose behind this sudden change in character? And what will be the final outcome? It's indeed a great mystery. And the story behind it is certainly one that will bear... watching.

MAN IS THE

by Duffy Vohland



In the beginning, Stan created Him.

"Him, who?", you ask? "Him", Adam Warlock, that's who. The fellow that's currently appearing in *STRANGE TALES*, whom we know as Warlock, was once nothing more than a pronoun: Him.

Him began back in *FANTASTIC FOUR* #66 in 1967. In this story by Stan Lee, Jack Kirby and Joe Sinnott, we got to see the origin of the Gold-Skinned Gladiator. Briefly, he was created in a research lab called the Bee Hive by four baddies who intended to use him for a Hitler-

type world conquest. One of those "baddies" went to Alicia Masters (Ben Grimm's blind girl friend) to use her to get into the Bee Hive to retrieve the "Cocoon" (in which rested the unborn Him). He merely walked through the wall of her apartment and told her to follow him and he would cure her blindness. (I always thought Alicia was a dumb broad... following just *anybody* who walks in through her wall!)

That was back in the good old days when I was still a "fan" and would send zillions of letters to the various comic companies begging for

news. (This was before the days of *The Comic Reader*, where a fan could get his news regularly). About a year after the initial appearance of him, I sent one of my infamous letters to Marvel inquiring about the return of the character, to which Marvel replied, "Him? What's a Him?"

Evidently, I knew something before Marvel did, because about six months after my letter, Him showed up in *THOR* (#165, to be exact). The story was once again handled by Lee and Kirby and involved Him's (doesn't that sound ridiculous?) quest

FATHER TO HIM

for a mate. His mistake was that he picked on Thor's "woman", Sif, and Thor was not that crazy about the idea. (Neither was Sif, come to think of it!)

Now we jump ahead three years or so to April of 1972 and MARVEL PREMIERE #1. After many moons in character-limbo, Him showed up again in a story entitled, "And Men shall call Him... Warlock." In this Roy Thomas/Gil Kane story we found the High Evolutionary musing aloud to himself in his asteroid home (Face it, friends, if you were all alone in a hollowed out asteroid you'd talk to yourself, too!) about the failure of his recent evolutionary experiments. Suddenly, he happened upon a strange cocoon floating around in space and brought it aboard. Inside the cocoon he found (Surprise!) Him.

Leaving Him, who had decided to remain in his cocoon (probably waiting for the number six bus to the Bronx) the High Evolutionary went off to handle a little chore... creating the counter-Earth. But, some of H.E.'s (Those are his initials, folk! Hmm... Him becomes Warlock and now we've got a H.E.) past creations appear "just" in time to mess up Counter-Earth. Y'se, H.E. wanted Counter-Earth to be just like

Earth with none of it's faults, but while H.E. was resting, his evil creations (lead by the Man-Beast) messed it up and allowed evil to exist in Counter-Earth's people.

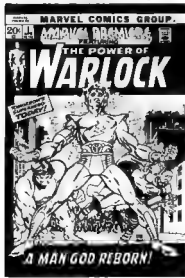
H.E. started battling his foes, but, unfortunately, he didn't fare very well since he was outnumbered. Seeing this, Him (who was still waiting for the number six to the Bronx burst out and came to the aid

POWER OF WARLOCK. Roy and Gil still handled the creative chores in the first issue of the new mag, with Mike Friedrich taking over scripting in #3 and Bob Brown picking up the pencils in #6. The eight issues of WARLOCK chronicled Adam's stay on Counter-Earth as he tried to undo the evil brought on by the Man-Beast. In the series Warlock met up with some interesting folks: Dr. Victor Von Doom, a scientist who helped save Earth (remember, kiddies, this is Counter-Earth), and Dr. Reed Richards, who was turned not into Mr. Fantastic, but into an evil creature called The Brute. Silly, ain't it?

Less than a year after the last issue of his own magazine, our old buddy Adam turned up in HULK #176. This three-parter by Roy Thomas/Gerry Conway/Tony Isabella/Herb Trimpe/Jack Abel/& The Dwayne Hickman Fan Club involved Warlock dying (killed by that nasty old Man-Beast), eventually getting resurrected, and boldly going where no man has gone before... (Hold that phrase, I think that's been done before). Anyway, that brings us to the present and STRANGE TALES.

Jim Starlin is taking the Warlock to those places where no man has gone before, and is doing it quite well. He currently had Adam on a crusade against a universal Church of weirdos. I recently asked Jim what he plans to do with the series in the future, and he wouldn't tell. That means one of two things: (1) It's going to be so fantastic that he can't even tell FOOH about it, or (2) he don't know.

In his almost ten-year history (Gee, it seems like only a decade ago!), Adam Warlock has been through a heckuva lot, and if I were him (Yes, Virginia, pun intended.), I'd be sitting up there chewing on a comet by now. All in all, he has always been a great character, and I can see Starlin taking him to even bigger and better heights than he ever took the ol' Kree warrior, Captain Marvel. Keep watchin'!



of the High Evolutionary. After the baddies were defeated by Him, the High Evolutionary told Him that he (The High Evolutionary) would obviously have to destroy his newly-created Counter-Earth because of all the "evil" on it. Him begged H.E. (These pronouns are driving me bats!) not to destroy the planet since Him thought he could save it from evil. H.E. finally agreed to give Him a chance, and the story ended with Him descending to Counter-Earth.

MARVEL PREMIERE #2 began with Him crashing on Counter-Earth where he met up with a bunch of (dumb) teen-age runaways who named him (for who-knows-what-reasons) Adam Warlock.

After that story in which Warlock defeated one of Man-Beast's group, he moved over to his own magazine called (strangely enough) THE

The Harmony Factor Syndrome Beneath Wakanda

DONALD F. McGRATH

THE HARMONY FACTOR SYNDROME BENEATH WAKANDA

PAGE ONE Black Panther is poised about to attack a tribe of eleven hundred amoeba who are about to attack the secret underwear factory hidden beneath Wakanda's secret laundrymat. Note to artist: Make sure the amoeba are fanged as they are cannibal vampire amoeba (vampire are in so let's exploit 'em. The kids'll gobble that poop up!)

Cap 1 PANTHER'S PANTS Part 1: 003

Cap 2 They have SOUGHT the Panther for many weeks now, these cannibal vampire amoeba waiting beneath the dirt brown dirt of Wakanda's hidden jungle above the secret Laundrymat and the unknown Underwear Plant, and all the WHILE they have waited, their one-celled munda have pondered only one uninteresting thought: Why have they waited in the broiling heat of Wakanda's Pant Pressers for all these weeks?

Cap 3 Could this ALL have been HURTMONGER'S doing? Yes, Eric HURTMONGER, raised on 100th street in Harlem because being born THERE gave him a real heritage he could try all his life to live down but fial because he's got a dumb brain

Cap 4 Perhaps

Cap 5 But then perhaps not. Perhaps instead, it was all due to the birthing of the Black Panther all those years ago. His parents born even before they themselves sired their offspring, T. Chicken, who, when he had grown older (in corresponding time sequence to their (his parents') also aging of old age and in accordance to the Mann Act. Yes, his PARENTS who T. Chicken has not thought of in many years because he was a lousy son who never wrote to them on Mother's or Father's Day but conveniently he thinks of now to aid him in this in depth character analysis which attempts to BRIEFLY show the Panther actually had parents while the readers had always wondered if he had blown fully born from the brow of the great white gorilla N8Kookoo, who also happened to have parents but since they were gorillas I don't think I'll go into detail on

(note to letterer: I DON'T THINK YOU SHOULD HAVE MUCH PROBLEM FITTING THIS COPY INTO THE SPACE I'VE INDICATED. ONE INCH SHOULD BE MORE THAN ENOUGH D*RN

Credits	DONALD F. McGRATH	RICH BUCHLER	KLAUS JANSEN	TOM O'BCHOWSKI	BOOK
	word putter downer	GIL KANE	Whoops		letter:
		BILLY GRAHAM			
		crayoner			

PAGE TWO

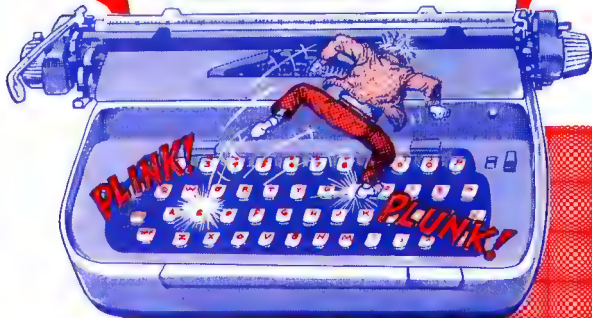
Para. 1 Panther's girl Monica Moosemeat is in the jungle, by a pond, totally naked enjoying herself

Cap 2 MONICA MOOSEMEAT sits in the dirt brown dirt of Wakanda's dirt farm, and she thinks back to her days in Harlem (on 110th Street) where she sang for money as a topless opera singer. Yes, she thought of other singers she ADMIRED. Singers such as Kate Smutin, and Monica Moosemeat wondered truly to herself if the Moon would

Cap 3 INDEED ever come over the mountain

Two days later she would not ponder that thought any longer. She would have lost INTEREST and have gone on to other thoughts that were far more dull, yet hardly as exciting.

Burl. NEXT A room full of deadly marionettes and no Marion to ette them. PLUS The Sunshine Force of Guadeloupe Houdini! Be there!



THE 1974 IRVING AWARDS

Welcome Faithful Ones, to the Second Annual Irving Forbush Awards for Excellence. This is your chance to give your nod of approval to your favorite Marvel comics, characters, artists, writers, and armadillos. Just fill out the ballot below (for a reasonable facsimile thereof) and get it to us by July 1, 1975. The address is THE IRVING FORBUSH AWARDS, c/o Scott Edelman, 575 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10022. Only FOOM members are eligible to vote.

- 1) Favorite Marvel Comic _____
- 2) Favorite Marvel Cover _____
- 3) Favorite Marvel Star _____
- 4) Favorite Marvel Supporting Character _____
- 5) Favorite Marvel Villain _____
- 6) Favorite Marvel Writer _____
- 7) Favorite Marvel Penciller _____
- 8) Favorite Marvel Inker _____
- 9) Favorite Marvel Letterer _____
- 10) Favorite Marvel Colorist _____
- 11) Favorite Marvel Color Story _____
- 12) Favorite Marvel Black-and-White Story _____

and while you're at it, how about answering the next couple of questions.

- 13) Who would you most like teamed up with Spider Man in **Marvel Team-Up**? _____
- 14) Who would you most like teamed up with the Human Torch in **Marvel Team-Up**? _____
- 15) Who would you most like teamed up with The Thing in **Marvel Two-In-One**? _____
- 16) Who would you most like to see in his, hers, or their own strip? _____
- 17) Who would you like to see a feature article on in FOOM Magazine? _____

Final Irving Award Special Bonus: Once we've tallied your votes, we're going to put them in a box and pick out five ballots. Each of the winners will get a whole pile of goodies, including—oops! (We can't let it get out yet!) 'Nuff Said!

Name _____
Street _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____

FOOMAIL

Where have all the letterbacks gone? Some say they've disappeared, never to return. They're right.

But they've been replaced by others. Irene Vartanoff, Gary Lillian, and Duffy Veldand have been replaced by Dean Mullaney, Ralph Macchio, Jack Frost, and Roger Kierass.

So the audience has remained the same, it's only the people making it up that have changed. The format is still there—it just has different faces.

Fandom, you're not getting older, you're getting better.

Dear Marvel,

While glancing through some old DAREDEVILS of mine, I read the letter section of issue #45. A certain Tony Isabella of Cleveland, Ohio had a letter published. Is this the same Mr. Isabella who began scripting DD with issue #118? After all, Roy Thomas used one of Tony's ideas in issues #57-58 (Daredevil revealing his true identity to Karen Page).

William Koenig
2538 Eastgate Lane
Bloomington, Indiana 47401

Well, Bill, it looks like the jig is up. You've discovered our secret.

Yes, that was Tony Isabella, and what's more, most of our present writing and editorial staff (if not all) have had misadventures printed in the pages of a Mighty Marvel comic, all the way from Doug Mench to Dan McGregor.

In fact, we may even print some of them in FDOM, just to show how vivacious have changed. Unfortunately, the authors of said letters may not feel as happy about that as FDOM does, and may take drastic action, such as kidnapping the Editor's pet armadillo.

Only time will tell.

Dear Stan Lee,

In FDOM #7, for the VOICE OF FDOM letters, I think we ought to put more information about coming issues and new mags, etc. But don't bring back puzzles or games.

Please give the SILVER SURFER and DOC SAVAGE back their old mags.

Get on the ball! The competition has been coming out with new and better comics.

Will there be any new mags for the FALCON, SILVER SURFER or DOC SAVAGE? Will there be a brand new team? Or maybe you could throw out some Avengers and put in some new ones. PLEASE answer.

Keep on FOOMING!

Anthony Smith
1514 W. 11th
Chicago, IL 60608

There are no plans for putting out a Falcon mag in the near future, though there are few writers who would hesitate to write his adventures, just to show that the Falcon could be made into something more than Captain America's sidekick.

As for Doc Savage, there's going to be a one-shot fifty-center called GIANT-SIZE DOC SAVAGE which will be hitting the newsstands in the next few months, in addition to our DOC SAVAGE black-and-white, which you should know about if you've been following our Bullpen Bulletin.

And Tony. We will be coming out with a Silver

In England,

Which you'll discover more about if you turn to the pages of our news section.

Dear FDOM,

I'm sorry about Tony Isabella having to quit editing the mag. I really liked him. The Marvel M-In-Frams were both interesting and entertaining. I hope you have more of them. This issue code was better than last. The Beast code had too many flaws in it. The reviews of Captain America, Sucky and the Falcon were excellent.

The contests were really great, but I would really hate to cut out the crossword since it would ruin the book. So I wonder if I could send in a drawn copy?

The new way you presented the Dept. of INFORMATION was more informative than usual but you could have put some more INFORMATION about the Avengers or the Fantastic Four instead of that wasted space on the Marx Brothers. Till next time....

Ken Marchionese
741 Edgewood Road
Fayetteville, NC 28304



Black Future,

FDOM seems to have a pretty good set-up, but please, cut out the baby pictures from now on. They were ridiculous! Maybe you can put them in CRAZY, but not in FDOM. I definitely favor seeing more covers from future mags. The new personal approach to artists and writers in the Dept. of INFORMATION is good, but when dialogues like the one between Ary Jones and Keith Pollard are printed, they are a little ridiculous. The readers are supposed to be finding out what's happening in future IRON MAN and DEATHLOCK issues and all you get is a bunch of mishmash. It seems like a waste of space when more pertinent info could have been printed.

John Fawcett
843 Broadway
Rivers, Mass. 02151

As of this writing, these are the only three letters of comment on FDOM #1 that have been received by the Mighty Marvel Bullpen. Hop to it, tigers! How do you expect Scarscrow Scott Edelman to correct all his mistakes if you're not there to point them out as he does them? So write. It's our only pleasure.

But we listen very carefully to the mail that we do get, and thus we answer the following.

a) Sorry to see Tony go. Ken? Well, if you're really that interested in the progress of the young one from Cleveland, you can pick up any of the following mags which he now writes. CAPTAIN AMERICA, GIANT-SIZE SUPER VILLAIN TEAM-UP, GHOST RIDER, LIVING MUMMY, GIANT-SIZE AVENGERS, SON OF SATAN, and undoubtedly more which have slipped our mind.

b) Yes, Ken you may send in a duplicate copy of any content you wish to enter if you don't want to damage your copy of FDOM.

c) As all three of you can see, we've toned down the humor a bit (and cut out the baby pictures) in order to give you as much news as FDOMially possible.

As for the rest of you out there, do you want Ken and John to decide the fate of your favorite fan magazine? If not, send your comments to:

FOOMAIL
c/o Marvel Comics
975 Madison Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10022



Welcome once more to another **FOOM** news column, as the raveng reporter risks life and limb to bring you actual tapes of the Bullpen giving you the latest news and the greatest views on our mind-boggling books in their natural habitat. We hope you enjoy it.

And as an extra added attraction, we make the following offer: We want you to help write next issue's news column! Send in to **FOOM** any questions you have about any of our books, and we will ask the writer or artist you have in mind your questions whilst they stand before the sacred tape recorder, which will bring each and every word into the pages of **FOOM**, and thereafter, into your home. Or cave. Or wherever else you may care to pursue the Department of **hFOOM**ation in each issue of your favorite fan magazine.

So send in your questions to: **DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION**, Marvel Comics, 375 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022. But meanwhile, read on! If there's anything you don't understand, be sure to write in and let us know! 'Cause we'll tell you what we really mean (but only if ya ask us so) next issue!

TONY ISABELLA ON CAPTAIN AMERICA

FOOM: What new angles will you be taking as we approach the bicentennial of the country?

TONY: We'll be starting eventually, as soon as I figure out which order the issues go in, a very long bicentennial story which will run about six months and lead up to all sorts of interesting things with Cap fighting supervillains in various stages of American history. We'll also be doing some more with the Falcon to make his a

stronger character in the book. He will accept his real past and realize that the six years he's lived as basically another man has given him a chance to start anew. But he'll be a lot more violent character than he was previously, almost like a human-weapon character—the Punisher, you?

FOOM: So he'll no longer have the impedes to be a social worker?

TONY: I haven't worked out anything about his personal life yet. All I know is that as a crime fighter, he'll be much tougher, much harder. One of the first things I plan on doing is having Luke Cage guest-star with the Falcon and Cap in a two-part story in which they wipe out Morgan and his mob. Other than that I'll probably bring back the Adiposid. You'll probably see Batroc teamed up with Captain America in the bicentennial story. A new character called the Gun Runner—a villain. The starting secret of the sixth sleeper. And other neat stuff like that.

JOHN ANASTAS MEMORANDUM ON GUNNY HULK

JOHN: Sounds like a kidney ailment. No. That's not nice. Bloodstone is, I hope, going to be an unusual strip. It's got a lot of varied elements. I suppose I should give just a little background on it. The character's basic concept is Len Wein's. The storyline and development concept is mine. The basic premise of the story is to have a person who fights huge monsters. Particularly the Kirby/Ayers type. Not necessarily the old Kirby/Ayers monsters. We're not going to necessarily bring back Zabo from Planet X or anything like that, although there are certain Kirby/Ayers monsters that are everybody's favorite and would be fun to bring back. For instance, I might bring back Fang Fang Foom. I might even resolve "It"—the whole Colossus thing. But that would be something I'd be doing much in the future, 'cause I've already got the first year and a half

of this strip semi-planned in my head. The first issue will take the basic action at you, sort of keep the reader a little confused, 'cause the second issue is when you start getting into Bloodstone's character. In the first issue he swells in and says these vague things while he beats on this monster. The monster beats him up. We're introduced to some elements pertaining to future issues, but in the second issue we start getting inside Bloodstone and we start developing him as a character. Although I'll also start bringing in supporting characters that will be very important to the strip, 'cause Bloodstone is a very grim, extremely invincible type character. What comes out of this is that we have to develop characters around him, as well as himself. To act as foils. In concept he's been hurting this one particular creature.

FOOM: Moby Dick?

JOHN: Well... no. This creature is unlike the other monsters he fights on the strip. He's been hurting this thing for 10,000 years.

FOOM: In what area does this take place?

JOHN: The takes place in the present. He's been hurting this monster for 10,000 years, and for quite research indicates that would make him a Luke Driveler. His origin is going to be very slowly revealed. His origin is very complex and multi-parted. The whole 10,000 years contributes to his origin. After he gets done playing with a monster in San Francisco, where these initial stories take place, we begin to learn about this creature he's been stalking all these years. It's sort of humanoid, but really yochty. It's got veins all near the surface of its skin, quivering. Instead of a head it's got an octopus. Like an octopus on the top of its shoulders instead of a head. He's

DEPARTMENT

kind of a leech. He wraps his tentacles around people's heads and sucks their life off. He's really disgusting, but he's intelligent to a point. He's intelligent the same way the Apes in **PLANET OF THE APES** are intelligent. A different intelligence. It has strong instinctual bias, so he's intelligent on a very animalistic level, having advantages in certain cases. We'll develop sort of a mystique around him, I hope. We're going to go into an island of Dr. Moreau-type storyline, bringing back a villain which I feel had great potential but was very underused. I'd like to keep a secret, revealing it at the end of the first year of the book. However, the fact that I've mentioned The Island of Dr. Moreau should give certain literary fans a hint.

FOOM: We instantly thought of the High Evolutionary.

JOHN: I won't even react to your guess while the tape records so, because I just don't want to reveal anything, and I know you print whatever gets on that thing. However, two people are going to be introduced as his operatives who appeared in one issue of **MARVEL TEAM-UP** once. I won't tell you who they are, but if you do figure out who they are, it gives you a hint to who the villain is. I think some nice things will be coming up. I know I'm having a good time with it, and hopefully my artist will have a good time with it. I hope to work closely with my artist, my artist being Pat Boyette. I don't believe Pat has ever done anything for Marvel before, and I think we may be in for some surprises.

HERB THOMPSON ON THE HULK

FOOM: You've been working on the HULK for how long?

HERB: One hundred and twenty-three years.

FOOM: How do you manage to stay fresh? The Hulk is a character you've done for we-don't-know-how-many straight issues.

HERB: Fresh. Fresh. That's a tough question, 'cause most

of the time I don't think about it. I just put down the first thing that comes into my head, and if it doesn't look so good, I figure I have a hundred more ideas to make it better. It's simply a matter of having a job to do and then adjusting to it on a day-to-day basis. It's like working in a GM plant—you put fenders on a car. It's your job. It's what you do. Sincerely, that's the only thing I can say about freshness. I'll say one thing—it's amazing that I'm really totally on one level, totally bonded with the thing: conceptually. When I give it the old miltified routine, I say, "My God, I've had it!" But when I get into the story, once I start on the book, I get interested in it. I have no idea why, but it's almost as if it were the first one all over again.

FOOM: How different is it from the first one?

HERB: The approach is identical. The only difference in the actual story is the follow-up. In the first ones I did, with Stan, he scrutinized the story very carefully as it came in, as he did all the books. He went over it panel by panel. There were always changes. Most of the time. Most of the time they were no big deal, but he always had ideas as to action, and so on. I still try to make believe that he's still going to look at it panel by panel, and try to anticipate things that might have to be changed. But I've never had trouble with the storytelling. It's always the action. He's always wanted a tremendous amount of action between the covers. So if you do have a fight scene, you say to yourself, "What can I do to maximize the action, after I've blown the plot and have to squeeze it into two pages?"

FOOM: We understand Lan does very loose plots...

HERB: No looser than anybody else's. I've worked with

worst results in inking from anyone else than, say, John Severin. You know who I liked? When Sal Buscema started working here, he did a couple of jobs on the Hulk that I thought were really nice. I still have the originals on some of that. As far as my style goes, Sal Buscema probably did the best job on me. I liked the first few Trapane jobs but he started to goof off after awhile. If something doesn't strike me, I don't say anything or make a big deal about it—I don't make sense. It's a comic book, and there are hundreds of them coming out. Guys are in the business, they're in here to make a living, so why mess it up?

TONY ISABELLA ON SON OF SATAN

TONY: I have absolutely no idea what I'm doing on my first issue, but I have about four or five other stories worked out. Basically it'll be the same type of thing Steve was doing—getting into the occult. Characters will move around alot. We'll have characters come in for awhile, drop out, then maybe come back a little later on. There won't be any characters who'll be in every issue. Damon'll be out of St. Louis as Steve's last issue and I plan on keeping him moving around. There's no plans for him to meet Robert Miller in this immediate future.

FOOM: Any upcoming titles?

TONY: "Parables of Doom." Come to think of it, that's the only title I have. Some of these titles come a little closer to a guy.

uses their life to live. There's a villain called the Darkstar who's an ancient being who was imprisoned in Hell for billions of years until he decided that he'd had enough and managed to break partly out to come back. He's half in and half out. Lilith has some redeeming qualities—she does things because the person she's doing them to is evil. In the Satana story a guy comes up to her in a town. Seven or eight hundred people have just been obliterated in one instant. This witch, a villainess, has just killed his wife and his friend, and now she's run off with his son to sacrifice him to these nameless gods. Satana, he thinks, is partly responsible, and he begins to talk it out on her, and she just wipes him out and looks at him saying, "Well... you're a twerp." She takes his soul. Satana is an evil woman. There's nothing nice about her. If she's nice it's because she wants to be.

FOOM: What would happen if Satana met Lilith?

CHRS: Nothing? How if Satana met Dracula, that would be interesting. Because she's half-human—he could take her blood if he wanted to. She has other things in her favor... she has the basilisk. She's an extremely powerful witch. These are things I'll play around with for four issues a year... assuming that the book comes out for more than four issues. There's not that much pressure, as it's a quarterly, even though it has two more pages than any other monthly or bi-monthly book.

TONY ISABELLA ON GHOST RIDER

FOOM: Now that you're writing two books about children of Satan...

TONY: Well, Ghost Rider is no longer a child of the Devil.

OF INFORMATION

guys who've done tighter plots—Engelhart would give you a tremendous amount of material, and from my own experience, though a lot of people would disagree with me, Gary Friedrich. I'm not used to that, though. I like it the other way around. I prefer to have it done on a very skimpy basis. Not skimpy, but brief as possible, leaving the detail to fall where it may when I start to draw the story. I don't like to work everything out in advance, "cause when you do that, by the time you get into the story, it feels like you're doing it all over again, rehearsing the same old stuff. I'd just as soon prefer a looser plot. You have the least amount of fun on a story when you feel the most restricted, and you feel the most restricted when you have a very tight plot.

FOOM: So you wouldn't like working with a complete script?

HERB: No, I don't think so. A lot of guys would as far as the money goes and the time's concerned, but I think in this business, a lot of guys learn that either you shoot the wad on one or two stories, there's a lot more to go than that. So the idea is to pace yourself. So there's a compromise you have to reach as far as the plotting though. The story should be generally pinned down, but with enough left open so that if an idea hits you you can put it in.

FOOM: How do you feel about inking your own pencils?

HERB: Inking is terrible for my nervous system. It's just the act of sitting there with a brush carefully going over each line. Most of the time I can't sustain too many books in a row, inked. I just go crazy.

FOOM: We happen to prefer your inking on yourself to anybody else's.

HERB: On myself, I do too. That's why I like to do it. The colorists say, "Your stuff is easy to color." The writers say, "Your stuff is very easy to write." The inkers say, "Your stuff is really easy to ink." But y'rt, I think I get the

CHRIS CLAREMONT ON SATANA

CHRIS: If I ever figure out as to which book she's in Vampire Alacazr is doing a two-part story called "The Damnation Waltz" which is essentially the origin of Satana's new costume. It didn't start out that way. It'll be a throwaway at the end of the second part. Essentially, what happens is that she gets turned into a normal woman, and the woman she turns into runs around thinking that she's been possessed, when in reality it's the other way around—the succubus has been possessed. It really sounds silly when I put it that way, though. Vicenta's art on the first part is really incredible. I was really floored by it. In addition, we just got in a fifteen-page story in from De Zanza's Tribe—that's a nice story. The idea of the new costume is to make her a kind of occult/super-hero type. A little less of the feel that's in Dracula.

FOOM: In both the color and black-and-white?

CHRIS: Well, there's not really much difference. There's just that two-part story. It's not a series. The two-part was submitted the week they cancelled HALLOWEEN OF HORROR, and since it was a really good story and Vicenta needed work, and I beat Mary over the head—"Please!"—he let Vicenta do them. I don't know if she'll ever appear again in the black-and-white. There are no books for her to appear in. We can't put her in VAMPIRE TALES or DRACULA LIVES, and she'd sure look silly in CONAN. But there's always UNKNOWN WORLDS. Currently in the color books, she'll comprise a twenty-page backup story in GIANT-SIZE DRACULA, except for the first appearance, where she'll only be fifteen pages. The image will be more super-heroic. She's like a nasty, satanic, satanic Black Widow. In the next issue she meets a professional thief, and they get involved with a guy who steals people's lives. He sucks it right out of them, and

Ghost Rider has been saved by J.C. himself. The way it stands right now, the Ghost Rider only turns into the Ghost Rider when there are other people in danger. We'll keep that going for a couple of issues while he fights the Trapster, the Orb, Death's Head, and a few other villains. This is all leading up to another appearance by J.C., and an explanation of Ghost Rider's entire life. Rosanna will be coming back to the strip. We're introducing all sorts of new characters as the Ghost Rider gets a new job as the Starman's stunt man. There'll be about four or five regular characters that'll pop in and out of the strip. When Rosanna returns she'll be bringing Ghost Rider's mother with her. That'll make Ghost Rider the first one of our characters actually to have had a mother appear in his comic.

FOOM: Do you know any titles of upcoming issues?

TONY: Not really. I don't even have a title for the job I'm writing now. In the plot I called it, "The Return of the Trapster," but that's really a dumb title. Unless I get inspired, that'll be the title of the book. At this point I don't have any titles, just ideas for villains and where they're going.

UNKNOWN WORLDS AND SKULL THE SEVENTH

FOOM: What's the basic premise for the character? What does he do?

MAAY: It's a group of several characters. Skull is one of them. His name is John Scully. He was a POW in Vietnam for five years until he was finally let out. He's had a lot of problems trying to adjust to our current life. There was an accident that caused him to run away. Without going into too much detail on it, somehow he gets thrown back in time with these other people. Back to a prehistoric setting. Before anyone who reads the book gets too excited about why there are cavemen, dinosaurs, and

animals from different time periods, there *is* a reason for it. The series is not quite as simple as it appears in the first issue. In fact, it's a very, very complicated worked out in advance series. The series will work out a lot of elements that I don't want to talk about at this point. It's going into a theory of mine about civilization and intelligence and something which has never been brought up by anyone in the past, but I feel is historically accurate. It's going into a lot of directions that no one expects a dinosaur book to go into, plus have all the action and adventure and whatever else is necessary for it to have. As I say, I don't want to go into too much detail, because it'll blow ideas that'll be finally coming out in issue six, seven, and eight of the story. To give even the slightest hint now would hurt. All I can say is that it's not what it seems.

TONY ISABELLA ON DAREDEVIL

TONY: The title of my last issue was "Holocaust in the Kells of Hydra."

FOOM: How are you saying goodbye to Daredevil?

TONY: A very friendly parting. I bought him a cup of coffee. I said, "It's been fun writing ya, DD, give my love to Natasha." He said, "Be seen 'ya around." Actually—
FOOM: No he didn't!

TONY: Whaddaya mean?

FOOM: How could Daredevil say, "See ya around"? (After a moments silence, Tony continues.)

TONY: Actually, I'm not saying goodbye to the character, only in the sense that I'm not writing the book. I enjoyed doing Daredevil and I hope that I'll be able to do it again sometime. My last issue kind of ties up the four-part HYDRA story I was doing, clears up Foggy Nelson's offer of working for S.H.I.E.L.D. and just sets the stage for Len's next issue and further development. Len will be continuing the basic storylines that I've started with DD and the Black Widow. So in a sense, what I've started will at least be continued. We've discussed several ideas. I've given Len some of the ideas I've had. He may use a few of them, just as I've used ideas that he's given me.

FOOM: What about Jack Hammer?

TONY: Jack Hammer is in the last issue of DAREDEVIL I wrote #123, which I'm writing right now and which is late. I've handed in pages 1, 2, and 18 to John. I do that occasionally just to confuse the man. Jack Hammer is the man who built HYDRA's secret headquarters. I won't tell you where it is, cause then it wouldn't be a secret anymore.

CHRIS CLAREMONT ON WAR IS HELL

CHRIS: Happy Herb Trimpe is the permanent artist on WAR IS HELL. Herb is away in foreign climes doing research so he can draw authentic battlefields and stuff. There's a fill-in issue by George Evans that takes place in Norway. Herb's last issue is Dunker. His second issue will probably be about the desert war—commandos and stuff. The idea is that, starting in the Evans issue, he'll be on both sides. He's going to be a German soldier, a Japanese soldier, an English soldier, or even a civilian caught in the middle. I've wanted very much to do a story on the Nazi-American Bund—say, set in Cleveland.

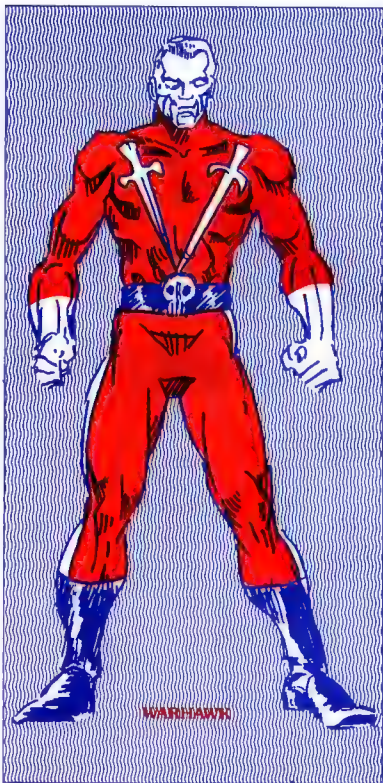
FOOM: He'll meet Howard the Duck?

CHRIS: Well, actually he meets Antonio Isabelle, Senator Bering that there were conflicts as to those who wanted to get America in the war, people who wanted America to stay out of the war, people who wanted America to declare war on England, and those who felt the same way about Germany. The whole idea was that the Bund was a respectable thing then.

FOOM: So is the book firmly entrenched in World War Two?

CHRIS: It's gotta stay there. It's pretty much staying chronologically. Right now we're in '40. What I want to do is expand the field to anywhere between 1939 and 1943. We could jump forward, backwards sideways—

FOOM: So no Revolutionary War?



CHRIS No. 'Cause Kowalski is very much World War Two. I'd almost like to do a situation where he's the defense attorney at Nuremberg.

FOOM Telford Taylor?

CHRIS Not Telford Taylor. Against Telford Taylor perhaps. Like Maximilian Schell in JUDGEMENT AT NUREMBERG. What it's like trying to justify those things. This would be after an issue in which I'd like to have him as an inmate in a concentration camp. But doing it right, not like Sgt. Fury. Going from that to a defense attorney at Nuremberg could be a very strange thing. I'd have little throwaway bits. Like he'll be running around England, and in this fighter/bomber squadron will be this young Captain named Ross. He wears a moustache. Guys call him "Thunderbolt." What we'll try to do is introduce supporting characters who'll come back as we move through the war. In the issue that George is doing, there's a Captain Von Hergen of the SS, who will appear at the end of the war, and by the time it's all over he'll be a colonel and a war criminal. The idea is that we'll meet supporting characters again and again, hopefully realistically moving through the war.

TONY ISABELLA ON DON MCGREGG

TONY Don McGregor is the salt of the Earth. He's one of the nicest guys I have ever met. I have only good stories for Don. I hope his life as a free-lancer will be successful, rewarding, and aesthetically pleasing to him. I think Don is one helluva guy.

ARCHIE GOODWIN ON LIFE

FOOM How do you feel about replacing someone shorter than yourself?

ARCHIE Great. Replacing someone shorter than myself doesn't upset my stomach.

FOOM What are your plans for changing the books to bring them more in line with your own philosophies of editing?

ARCHIE Let's not do this interview after all.

FOOM How do you feel about peace in the Middle East? Do you believe in détente?

ARCHIE I feel like Robert Redford in "The Candidate."

FOOM How do you feel about policemen who are out of work? But seriously though, many people consider your editing to be of the finest quality. How will you fit in with the Marvel style?

ARCHIE Probably very easily. I don't know.

FOOM You've worked on black and white books for other companies. Do you feel that this will be different?

ARCHIE No.

FOOM That was Archie Goodwin, folks.

TONY ISABELLA ON THE LIVING MUMMY

TONY You didn't ask me about the LIVING MUMMY.

FOOM We were going to.

TONY Why don't you ask me about the LIVING MUMMY.

FOOM You don't want us to ask that!

TONY Sure! Ask me about the LIVING MUMMY.

FOOM Okay. How about the LIVING MUMMY?

TONY I don't wanna talk about it. Seriously, though, in the LIVING MUMMY we'll be focusing off the War that Shook the World, and after that we'll be cutting down the cast of characters a quite a bit.

FOOM The Living Mummy, desit!

TONY The Living Mummy, desit. The editor of FOOM gets wrapped up in bandages. We'll have a new series called THE LIVING HELICOPTER. "Helicopter" is a synonym for hocky quack. What we'll do is cut down the characters to the Mummy, Roy, and Janice for the most part. Several other characters will be popping in and out. We have no idea where the Mummy is going after the war finishes up. We've discussed bringing him to America, we've discussed taking him around the Middle East. The very first issue after the war will be Val Mayerka's plot. Val has plotted a couple of issues from discussions with me

and I wanted to try one where he came up with the whole plot himself. So we'll try that for a one-parter after we finish up the war. After that we'll decide what we'll be doing with the Mummy in the future.

FOOM You will be doing his own inkling, then?

TONY Probably. I think so. What we decide one day about inkers doesn't always hold through to the next day.

STEVE GERBER ON THE DEFENDERS

FOOM What are you doing now that Steve Englehart has accorded Yellowjacket for the Avengers? New members, things like that.

STEVE Wundar and Nita have been nominated over and over again as a pair to join the Defenders. It's very possible I'm playing around with the idea. Nothing definite yet, but it's a possibility. There've also been a lot of letters asking for Havoc, the mutant character from the X-Men, but I'd suspect that he'll be appearing in the new X-Men book so he'll probably not be appearing in the Defenders. Venus has been suggested several times. Bill Everett's character. I would object to having a mythological character in the group. Or another woman. The other suggestion on that's been sent me is creating somebody brand new. One suggestion has been a black female character, but we've just done one. The new character Storm is a black heroine. There are all kinds of



possibilities. It's just at this point the basic four—Doctor Strange, the Hulk, Valkyrie, and Nighthawk. The team won't grow to more than six. I like the idea of Nita because of the relationship with Sub-manner, who was originally one of the Defenders—like Wundar because he's basically a silly character, but there's a lot of things that can be done with him within the context of that group. There'll probably be popping up in the next few issues the Guardians of the Galaxy, with the Defenders in the future battling the Baddoon. There'll be separate stories within the major story. Possibly a sword and sorcery type thing with the Valkyrie, and an alien world mystery story with Dr. Strange. That's one of the things I've been playing around with. No one knows whether the demons and deities Dr. Strange plays around with are confined to just Earth or other planets. There may be gods in other sectors of the galaxy that Strange has no way of knowing about, or of battling. We have to assume that the Ancient One's knowledge is not infinite. So that's one story right there. If I get involved in a futuristic science fiction story, probably teaming each of them up with one member of the Guardians. Doing that for about two issues



with a third climactic one—a big battle with the Baddoon. That's what I'm planning. After that a return to Earth, a meeting between Valkyrie and her husband, which is going to be a major subplot.

FOOM One of the things about super teams is that when you have all these characters in their own books, you can't do anything. You have to do stories which don't affect the stories or characterizations as created in their own books.

STEVE Right. It changed with the Fantastic Four basically. That was the first departure from it. The original Avengers was a return to the first Justice Society type of team. The thing you have to remember is that they got the team together because it's a team that will sell, sell, sell very well. Stan realized the limitations very early on with the Avengers, but then comics had never been done that way before, where characters change from issue to issue. All the members of the Justice Society and the Justice League, nothing basically ever changes in their individual books so you don't have the problems that you did when Thor, Iron Man, and Ant-Man were the major characters and things were happening in their books. I have that problem with Dr. Strange and the Hulk, and the best I can do is sort of watch what's going on in the other books, trying to keep consistent with what they're doing. I don't like it. I don't like working with the Hulk and Dr. Strange within the context of the Defenders. They're incredible characters and I enjoy using them when I do use them, but at the same time it makes the book a lot more difficult to write. Very properly, Steve and Len have control over what's happening over these individual characters, so the best I can do is follow their leads and concentrate in the personalities of Nighthawk and Valkyrie.

FOOM Have you thought of making the Defenders up of characters all without their own books?

STEVE The theory is the book would not sell without Dr. Strange or the Hulk or at least without the Hulk. And I can't see eliminating Dr. Strange and keeping the Hulk. Somehow the two are a pair in my mind. I don't know why.

FOOM One is physical and stupid, the other does nothing physically and—

STEVE Right. With Doc Strange gone, there's no one who could really control the Hulk. For one thing, Nighthawk certainly couldn't. Val just doesn't have the leader ship qualities yet to make herself feel as Doctor Strange does. They both have to lead. If one stays, the other has to stay. It's like that. I don't think they've been a detriment to the book. The one problem is the one that readers have pointed up over and over again—Dr. Strange is not an action character. He doesn't work best dealing with physical elements. In fact, looking over the old Ditko Doctor Strange books I found that he very rarely used his

power on—or used his spells, he doesn't really have any powers—on physical entities. They were mostly used against spiritual menaces of one kind or another. To me it's jarring to seem him knocking around the Sons of the Serpent with animated hoses and things like that. A large portion of the readership likes it. As many as dislike it, do like it. The letters I've seen—which is most of them, since I read all the mail—are violently opposed to getting rid of the Hulk. So he stays.

JOHN DAVID WARNER ON CAPTAIN AMERICA

JOHN: The April issue will have Captain America fighting that loose villain who everybody forgot—the Druid. Actually, he fights the Alchemed for the first half of the story until he kicks off in a painful, disgusting way. He sort of alchemizes himself to death. He derives energies from unstable elements alchemically crusted in his body by the Druid. They slowly kill him. He goes all to pieces.

FOOM: A leper?

JOHN: He gushes aloft. He dies; Captain America continues to get mad, 'cause Cap got pulled away from his best friend when he was really needed, and all the Druid wanted was revenge. He fights the Alchemed, then goes after the Druid. The Druid has that thing where he's against physical combat ever since the humiliating defeat by Nick Fury in those two issues of *STRANGE TALES*, so he's increased his powers to the point where he can keep Captain America from coming in great physical contact with him. He throws up all these enemies in his path. He defeats the Druid, but the Druid escapes at the end of the issue. I'm hoping to make the ending as weird as the beginning. I'm not going to return Captain America to where he was taken from, but I won't give anything away.

FOOM: How's it feel, writing the character?

JOHN: Captain America, I like alot. The weird thing about writing it is that what Steve Englehart has done with the strip is so intricate. He devoted so much time to developing the story-lines and character that I'm trying to maintain the flow. I don't want my issues in the middle of Englehart's issues to be jugged in the continuity. My biggest problem was on the first one I did off of my own plot—I didn't have any subplots in the story. This, honestly, was because I didn't have a chance to talk them out with Englehart to really do them justice, so I decided to experiment with a cover to cover action issue. It's kind of nice for a change. The April issue will return the subplots. Gale and Peggy will be sent to Los Angeles to check Falcon's background to discover how much the Red Skull told is true. But writing it has been fun. I like Captain America and I've had a ball doing it. But I'm sure every-



body is anxious for Steve to get back.

TONY ISABELLA TALKS ABOUT GIANT-SIZE SUPER VILLAIN TEAM-UP

TONY: You didn't even ask me about GIANT-SIZE SUPER-VILLAIN TEAM-UP, which is one hockey puck of a comic.

FOOM: That's a synonym for helicopter.

TONY: My first issue is "Slayern From the Sea." Attuma, Tiger Shark, Dr. Dorcas—(laughter from the peanut gallery—notably Duffy Vohland!) **FOOM:** Can you get that past the Code?

TONY: It'll get past the Code. They said, "You can have a villain named Dr. Dorcas, but don't give us any ridiculous names like Duffy Vohland."

DUFFY: What?

TONY: And speaking of Duffy, have you seen Niagara Falls lately?

DUFFY: What?

FOOM: It's still there.

TONY: Anyway, Tiger Shark, Dr. Dorcas, maybe the Pishans. I haven't plotted it yet. They'll be attacking HYDRO Island. After that we'll be bringing back an old Anti-Man villain called Jason Craig. The Man with the Voice of Doom, which nobody will remember. And just because of that we've gone reprint the original story in the back of the issue, or in the middle of the story, or maybe at the front of the book.

FOOM: How about on the cover?

TONY: Maybe we'll reprint it in *THE LIVING MUMMY* so we'll get ahead of schedule there. After that we'll have super-villains guest starring, the whole world at war. I'm contemplating a Ghost Rider/Son of Satan team-up versus Dr. Doom and Sub-Mariner. Lots of stuff like that. Song-Ray will definitely be there, and there'll be a subplot of the building of the Trans-Atlantic tunnel. Subplot suggested by Mary Wolfman, who stole it from the same movie I was going to steal it from, called, oddly enough, TRANS-ATLANTIC TUNNEL.

MARY WOLFMAN ON TOMB OF DRACULA

FOOM: Last issue, we talked about the difference between the black-and-white and color *Dracula's*, but what we'd like to know is how it is taking a character which the world has known for hundreds of years—

MARY: For a hundred years.

FOOM: We don't remember how long. But it's a worldwide character which everyone knows about, which people who don't read comic books know about, and you're translating it into your own personal version of

Dracula. How did you go about doing that?

MARY: I have several benefits when it comes to the *Dracula* mythos as far as what people expect of the character, having never seen any of the *Dracula* movies.

FOOM: You've never seen any of *Dracula* movies?

MARY: No. I never had any impression of what the character was outside of Bram Stoker's novel. Therefore, everything I've done is just astounding and expanding what the basic and original *Dracula* myth is without having Bela Lugosi or Christopher Lee give any impression of that character to me. So I was coming into the book with only one guideline to follow. Nobody else's.

FOOM: And you've still never seen any of the pictures?

MARY: I've seen *SCARS OF DRACULA* on television, which means I've seen a cut-up version.

FOOM: That's a Chris Lee version.

MARY: And I saw the Jack Palance version. I'm supposed to see *HORROR OF DRACULA* soon if I ever get over to somebody's house. Providing he hasn't been arrested for owning films.

FOOM: Let's talk about that!

(Tony Isabella walks by.)

TONY: Mary, what do you think of Don McGregor? **MARY:** Don's a wonderful person. If I had to take one person to represent everyone on Earth, it would be Don McGregor. Actually, I'd had to take one person it would be two Don McGregors. Nevertheless, those are the only two I've ever seen, and *SCARS OF DRACULA* was meaningless because it was on TV. I was supposed to see *HORROR OF DRACULA*, but I never got around to it. At this point I don't know if I want to see it, because it might still do something to me. I've never had a previous conception of the character other than Bram Stoker's so it doesn't matter that everybody knows him. 'Cause I didn't. I don't know if Bela Lugosi or Chris Lee approached the character differently, outside of the various clips I've seen, if I was really familiar with him I'd probably go insane trying to reconcile my vision of the character with the movie version. It's just as well I didn't see them.

FOOM: Yes. It fits in with the *Dracula* of the novel, and that's really all we care about.

FOOM: How did you come up with the supporting characters that you brought into the series?

MARY: I added Ducey, Edith, and Blade.

FOOM: What brought about the necessity to add these particular characters?

MARY: When I came in, it didn't seem to me that Rachel had the proper resources. Archdave had called her Dr. Van Helzing, which meant she had to be some kind of a doctor. I assumed of psychology, parapsychology, or something like that. More than a medical doctor. Judging from her age, I assumed that there wasn't enough about her that would have given her the money. I wasn't going to take into consideration Abraham Van Helzing, because she didn't seem to have those sort of sources. So I felt that there was a need for another character who could be a guiding ground for people. Someone who could sit back and not get involved in the action himself, but sort of pop things out. If you were hoping to take to *MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE* in the first season: Dan Briggs. Some guiding person very much like Professor X. The idea came immediately of an old man confined to the wheelchair. Unfortunately, alot of people thought that he was blind. He isn't. Gene Odderson gave him a walking cane—the same kind of cane a blind man uses. He's not blind, as I showed in one of the current issues. He had the glasses because he could not take a sunlight.

FOOM: Does that bring up any vampire undertones?

MARY: It says right in the copy that he's been bitten by vampires so many times that it had affected him. It didn't turn him into a vampire—they were able to save him. But it did affect him. And part of that was a bar's dislike for sunlight, which is why he wears dark glasses—to tone it down a bit.

FOOM: Are there any other effects we don't know

MARY: No. That's it. But it took about twenty-eight issues to introduce that. There are other things about



Danny just explained where he got his money from—being an ex bank president. So you'll learn some things there. With Blade, it was a matter of trying to get—the book was very somber and serious, and I was reaching for more frequent characters—closer to the Marvel spectrum. Therefore, Blade's characterization became that. It was a little off from what I wanted. I never got quite what I wanted, but that's okay. Chris is handling it, and between the two of us, we should come up with something we like. The idea of the wooden knives just happened to come. It came about a block away from here as I was putting together the character in my head, and then everything sort of fell in place. I can't say where it came from, but I did want another sort of vampire hunter. The same thing with Hannibal King. I liked detective stories. Sam Spade stuff, so I wanted to write one. It all led in at that point.

FOOM: Arsenic, do you think that there's anyone else who could possibly handle the book?

MARY: Obviously we've had variously every Marvel artist illustrate a Dracula story in the black-and-whites. To one degree or another, they do good Dracula stories. But there is absolutely nobody, in my opinion, who could capture the photographic realism, add the estate character elements to the story, better than Gene. He's a total master at that. And Tom, I always felt, was probably the best inker in comics, or at least one of the best. He's a man who, right from the beginning, has caught Gene's stuff. Gene is a very tough penciller to ink. He does not pencil in clean line. He pencils in tones. He uses the shades



of his pencil to get shades of gray. A regular inker, who is used to working in black and white only, would not work. Tom's an advertising artist and he used to work in shades. The two just mesh fantastically well. I can't think that anyone else in comics today, that I know of, can do the Dracula book the way I see it, as well as Gene Colan and Tom Palmer. They're just absolutely perfect for the book. Gene seems to like it and I know Tom likes it, so I don't foresee them getting off the book.

TONY ISABELLA ON DON MACGREGOR RETURNS

TONY: Don McGregor is a really nice guy. Don is a good father, a fun person, and he adds untold warmth and humor to the office. He's leaving stuff, but he's not leaving our hearts.

CHRIS CLAREMONT ON BLADE

CHRIS: I haven't seen the art on BLADE yet. Wrote a lot

of plots for BLADE, though. Unfortunately, when you give a guy 200 pages of PLANET OF THE APES and 13 pages of BLADE and say, "Well, we need PLANET OF THE APES yesterday, BLADE we need next week." So, five months later, when the APES comes rumbling in, we say, "Where's BLADE?" They say, "Blade who?" The staff should be in the next issue of DRACULA LIVES or VAMPIRE TALES, whichever comes first. Essentially, he's charged with murder. As far as he knows, he did murder the young girl—she was discovered with one of his knives in her chest! And he was there—he threw the knife just before she screamed and fell down dead. He didn't actually see the knife hit, but he figures he did it. It's a four-part story in which Saffron gets captured by the villains. He meets up with the female police inspector for three issues. She knows the truth about who killed this girl. We don't find out until the second issue. Of course, if he's guilty, he'll have to go to prison—"Blade, the Convicted Vampire Slayer!"

FOOM: He can perform exorcisms.

CHRIS: It's essentially a chase scene. Blade goes out looking for the people who kidnapped Saffron, he's gotta save her from the vampires. Kate Frazer, the cop who was introduced in GIANT-SIZE DRACULA #2, is out looking to find out who did it so she can bust them. Kate finds out too much; the vampires go after her. Blade finds out too much; he goes after the vampires. So we've got leads being chased by Kate being chased by vampires being chased by Blade. They catch each other and there's a big fight. They're chased through the subway, chased through the streets of London, chased through the sewers, chased through the buildings, and chased through the parks. It's a lot of fun. There's nothing pretentious about it. Good old action-adventure. No social commentary. Blade's fun. I can't say how it is to write 'cause I haven't seen anything yet.

FOOM: It's fun plotting, though.

CHRIS: Yeah, it's. Easiest plots I've ever done. They just come right out.

TONY ISABELLA ON GIANT-SIZE AVENGERS

TONY: My GIANT-SIZE AVENGERS is about an assassin who's paid one billion dollars to kill the Avengers.

FOOM: Plus exorcisms?

TONY: Plus all the McDonalds food he can eat. Don Heck drew it. Pretty nice stuff. I liked it. I haven't written it yet. That's late also. The assassin nearly kills the Avengers. In fact, I may change the ending and have him kill them. It's a good story. Probably one of the best Avengers I've ever written.

CHRIS CLAREMONT ON IRON FIST

FOOM: How do you feel about taking over the book?

CHRIS: Right off the bat, I'm trying to figure out what's going on. Because if a both color and black-and-white, it's essentially a monthly book. I walked in and they said, "All right, you're taking over this book. It's three weeks late. Where's the script?" You kind of go, "Ha!" The first issue is basically a shoot-em-up. I want to get more into who Danny Rand is. He was stuck in a mountain in Tibet for ten years—he doesn't know what's going on. He's never seen a TV before. Mini starts were around when he was young. When he was a kid, I SPY was on the air; BONANZA was on the air. THE MAN FROM UNCLE was on the air.

FOOM: The ED SULLIVAN show was on the air.

CHRIS: And Richard Nixon was a private citizen. Things sort of came full circle. The color strip will be more superhero, and the black-and-white more occult. I'm working up a six-part sequence where he goes through the six GIGAWATT.

FOOM: So you're doing research on the religion?

CHRIS: Yeah. In the color book, Colleen Wing is a private eye. A very good one. She runs an all-female detective agency, which is essentially her and Misty Night. Only Misty is, in fact, only a part-time, 'cause she's really a

poenter. Both of them are struggling in the Lower West Side, down in Soho. Iron Fist'll get involved through them, and basically be a super-hero. Hopefully, we'll start making him more interesting as time goes on, giving him a personality—now that we know what his face looks like. He's been a complete dud, and he's got to pull himself together, as it were. Next issue involves a villain from one of the earliest MARVEL TEAM-UPS, kidnapping, grand theft, more mayhem in Central Park, and a softball game. It may get to be only one page by the time we're done. Anything else... who knows? IRON FIST is at a point where I'm about up almost by improvement. It needs to be thought out, but to think it out you need the time to think it out, and as of right now, there isn't any. The idea is to get at least an issue ahead, so we can get some breathing space.

TONY ISABELLA ON THE 13TH MIGHTY MARVEL UNLIMITED

TONY: I'm also writing the 13TH Mighty Marvel Calendar, which Duffy is helping me on in a very "lame" way. Also, the ever-incredible, ever-irascible Pat is also working on the calendar. I will have all new pop-ups this year, with scenes of Conan at the Battle of Lexington, the Avengers helping George Washington cross the Delaware, and Thor helping Ben Franklin discover lightning. We've got quite a few sketches in already, it's shaping up into a beautiful calendar. And, of course, it's brilliantly written.

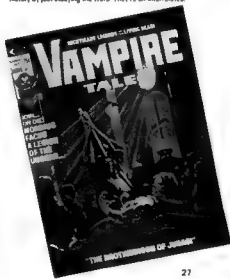
HERB TRIMPE ON WAR IS HELL

FOOM: How about WAR IS HELL?

HERB: I probably don't have much to say about it as I do about the HULK, because I haven't thought about it. The Hulk, I've had eight years to think about. I've done about eighty issues. You think about it alot. You don't think about the drawings or the philosophical or mental characteristics of the Hulk, 'cause you know 'em. You know what he does and what he doesn't do. So you don't have to worry. So having not to think about those things, you have the time to think about alot of other things. His nature, why he's been doing it all these years. You can think about a lot of things. But a thing like WAR IS HELL, I'm so concerned about how it looks.

FOOM: How about war books in general? You're supposed to be a war freak.

HERB: A war freak? Sheesh! There are guys who collect stuff, but I'm not interested in that. I like the subject. For one thing, most of the world's technical advances have been made during war time. You can study the Earth's history by just studying the wars. They're all interrelated.





Our whole political structure is revolving around things that happened in wars back to Napoleon's time. Things have altered and changed. National characters and personalities have formed around wars. We are living with these things today. It's a great source of material if you're into story-telling and drawing pictures, 'cause where else can you find an area - any period of history, any type of people, any type of terrain or background, on sea, land, or air - where you can get such strong inter-personal relationships. It's unbelievable. Battles are microcosms of human existence. Everything about the good and the bad and the evil, the high points and the low points, are brought out in a few hours of conflict. Of course, every good story has a gimmick. Especially disaster movies. In *THE POSSEIDON ADVENTURE* you've got a ship. It's interesting usually to have a ship or a burning building. You've always got gimmicks or hard-core for action, war is filled with gimmicks. All kinds of things.

FOOM: You knew enough to sit down with the colorist for World War Two plane coloring directions.

HERB: That stuff I'd know in my head. Mainly, I'm not a drawer. I'm more of a builder of models and a designer of gadgets than I am an artist. So I have hundreds of books on airplanes and things. I like them visually. I always figured that someday I'd like to do a book in which I can incorporate it. Another thing is that it's probably the most horrible human condition that can happen. It's the worst of everything. Any human condition - famine, disease, typhoons, pestilence - all those things happen in war. Like I say, it's a microcosm. It's not just a single thing happening, it's - all the things that can possibly happen are happening then, so you have a tremendous amount of suffering and horror. I think people should be kept abreast of what we can do to ourselves to have our blood-pressure checked. I think we've got to keep reminding ourselves of the disasters we can get ourselves into. I think it's a good thing, not to dwell on it, but rather on the destruction that can come about. All the things that take so much time building up can be destroyed in practically no time at all. Not to mention the people. There's a lot of pariahs in war. That's the angle I like the best. Kurtzman did a lot of great war

stuff for EC on that basis. Of the uselessness of it from an individual standpoint. The isolation... the downtrodden kind of existence.

FOOM: Did you ever want to write and draw your own stuff?

HERB: I'd find it hard to conform to the Marvel style. Even as it is, WAR IS HELL is as far removed from the old-type war stuff as you'll ever get in comics. You know, the old Sgt. Fury stuff - which I can't stand. That kind of war magazine is a disservice. It's a lie. It's a fraud. It's a big fake-out.

AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT. TONY ISABELLA ON DON Mc-GREGOR

TONY: Let me tell you about Don McGregor.

FOOM: Tell us about Don McGregor.

TONY: I like Don. I met Don two years ago - humble. He was just starting at Marvel, as I was just starting. He was a very human, warm person, and he hasn't changed. He's still one of God's good people.

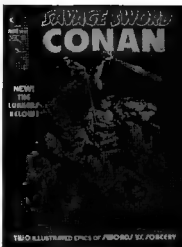
STEVE GERBER ON CRAZY

FOOM: What new things do you think you'll bring to the book?

STEVE: A whole bunch of new features. One will be a regular six-page feature called "The Underground Almanac," which is going to be secrets of the way people live. There'll be a medical column. Some little philosophies. Some coming events people can go to and attend, like a convention of amateur gynecologists on a raft off New York. Stuff like that. We'll be adding stuff like "Crazy's Hot Rashes." Late breaking news printed two months in advance. The Poetry Corner. We're trying to get a little culture into the magazine for a change. High-brow (expletive deleted). You can't use that word. High-brow stuff.

FOOM: Do you see your audiences any different from your predecessor?

STEVE: The audience is very different from my predecessor. My predecessor is dumb! The audience is smart. No, no, no, no. If anything, what we're going to try and do is expand the audience a little. I don't think Marvel ever had a coherent idea as to who the audience was. I don't think I did either. I was just writing material for the book before this and I was just playing it by ear. We had sort of assumed that our audience ended age-wise where the *LAMPPOON*'s audience began. About 18, 17 years old.



Now we're going to try and get an older audience reading the book in addition to those who are already reading it. All three of them. We've got one seven-year old, one nine-year old, and one sixteen-year old. We're gonna try and get an eighteen-year old to read the book now.

FOOM: What makes you think you're qualified to run a humor magazine?

STEVE: I'm in therapy. Have been for the past year-and-a-half and it's shown no results at all. That's my major qualification. Are you serious?

FOOM: We're not asking you in particular... we're asking what would make anyone think they were qualified.

STEVE: I have no sense of humor. That's really a difficult question, though. First of all, it helps if people have laughed at things you have said before. I used to do a lot of humor stuff in high school. I ran a humor magazine that was fairly successful and getting sound publicity throughout the city of St. Louis at the time. I was voted "Funniest Boy of 1965" at my high school.

FOOM: They're the ones that become undertakers.

STEVE: Or comic book writers who write about blood and death all the time.

FOOM: Or character aspersions and possible libel suit deleted.

STEVE: In fact, being a humor editor, writer, and even performer at one time - that's before I realized I was too ugly to go on television.

FOOM: That's just what Marty Feldman said.

STEVE: That's really what I wanted to do. Comics were a big thing I had always been interested in, but my main interest was in television, films, and broadcasting. I got involved in comics and have stayed with them for three years now, but the humorous direction was more the place I was headed when with the comics. I spent a lot of time just breaking conventions whenever I could find them. Not gatherings. Not comic conventions. Conventions of the medium is what I'm talking about. Howard the Duck and that sort of stuff. My inclination has always been towards extreme tragedy or extreme humor. Sometimes I don't think I'm very good at anything in between, that's a serious answer. There's no such thing as a set of qualifications that would enable someone to edit a humor magazine.

FOOM: Well, did everyone sit around and say "Who can

we get to edit this magazine?" And then someone said, "Let Steve do it, he's dumb enough."

STEVE: That's basically what happened. They had been considering another person who is in the humor field and is doing another humor publication for Marvel. It was decided primarily by Mary's recommendation and the fact that I was here in New York that I got the book. It was a question of "Who can we get to do this," and nobody else seemed very likely. That's absolutely true, and my pay reflects it. So there isn't a set of qualifications. I suppose if anyone thinks he's funny, if somebody thinks he's got a sense of humor, then he's as qualified as anyone else to do a humor book. And the readers'll be the ones who'll ultimately decide it in terms of whether they think the book is funny or not.

(Steve points to Don McGregor.)

STEVE: Now there's a man who doesn't think I'm funny; who doesn't think I have any sense of humor. Right?

FOOM: He not going to say anything while the tape recorder is on.

STEVE: Ask him if he thinks I'm qualified to edit a humor magazine?

FOOM: Do you think Steve's qualified to edit a humor magazine?

DON: I'm not really picking on Steve. Steve's been picking on me and is subject to retaliation.

STEVE: He's only angry because we leave room for the pictures in *CRAZY*. But we'd better get off this subject.

FOOM: What else are you adding to the book?

STEVE: Lee Mar's *CRAZY* lady feature which I like, and which Mary actually established in the book, is going to two pages in the future. And we'll be continuing with Moose and Consumer Confidential. All the things that were good in the book will remain, and Mary built a very good foundation. What I'm gonna try and do is improve on it the best I can. I just picked up my first issue of *MAD* in four or five years and was pleased to discover that it wasn't any funnier than *CRAZY*. This is not to say that I don't think *CRAZY* can't be made funnier. I'm just happy to discover that the competition isn't as difficult as I thought it would be. I'm not going to go into a tirade about other humor magazines, but I think it would be nice to do a funny humor magazine.

FOOM: I'll be a first.

STEVE: The thing I want to get away from with the book



is the fact that magazine humor has become very stereotyped since the invention of *MAD*. The established style that was extremely funny when it began, and it did well for about ten years. They're still using it. *MAD* had not changed in ten years. *CRAZY*, as many people have imitated, started out as an imitation of *MAD*, grew from that very rapidly, and within the first couple of issues it's taken on of its own identity. What I would like to do with the book is make as clean a break as I possibly can. Find something new to do. I'm not sure what that means yet, but I'm searching around for different directions. I want this to be as different from *MAD* or the *LAMPPOON* as the *Fireside Theatre* is from a Fanny Hagg record.

TONY ISABELLA ON GIANT-SIZE CHILLERS

TONY: With Tigra! It's not pronounced Tee-gra like everyone says, it's Tie-gra. I created the character, I know how it's pronounced.

DUFFY: With whose help?

TONY: With Duffy Vahland's help. No! He didn't help me!

DUFFY: Yes, I did!

TONY: Ya didn't create her, ya just came up with that one gimmick.

DUFFY: That's help.

TONY: Duffy is a big Hockey Puck.

DUFFY: It was my idea to use the Cat.

TONY: Small helicopter, big hockey puck. Anyway, the first story involves Jack the Ripper. It's drawn by Mike Vashberg, who's a good guy who lives out in Detroit and hardly ever comes into the office, which probably explains why he's still sane. That'll be 75 pages in every issue of *GIANT-SIZE CHILLERS*. If you really liked the mystery reprints that we put in *GIANT-SIZE CHILLERS*, you're outta luck! There's new material there now.

PAT BRODERICK ON IRON FIST

FOOM: Basically, what I want to know is how you feel doing a series, and any other things you'd care to impart to the reader.

PAT: As far as the series, I always wanted to do a superhero. The chance came up and I took it. *IRON FIST* has a lot of potential as far as character is concerned and as far as getting a lot of real action instead of a lot of comic book action. Which is interesting. He's sort of a mysterious character, which is one of the things that appeal to me.

FOOM: How much of the plotting have you been doing

aside from the breakdown?

PAT: The first one Chris will be giving me complete scripts because of the tight schedule. After that, I prefer to work from a finished script, the pacing's pretty well done. All you have to do is make it dramatic.

FOOM: But if you get a badly-paced script, you're dead.

PAT: I'm not that involved yet at sitting and pacing out stories. Any help I can get from the writer is appreciated. It usually tends to work out. At least it did on *IRON FIST*. It's a lot smoother story-telling.

RUSS JONES AND JOHN DAVID WARNER ON MONSTERS OF THE MOVIES

JOHN: I put blood and sweat into that magazine. I felt that the magazine has been very weak in the past with the exception of one issue that, I believe, Chris Claremont almost singlehandedly put together. I've been trying to change the magazine. First of all, it's getting a better proofreading job than it's ever gotten because of certain editorial shifts. These things do happen. And barring further shifts, we're getting a better proofread issue. A magazine like this takes more in terms of research than a comic-type black and white. You have to check names, dates, and production credits. You do an article on horror films of the Philippines and you've got to check all those facts I'd like people to send in their reactions. I'd like to know if all this effort I'm putting into this magazine is paying off. I'd like to hear suggestions. I'm trying to get better articles. I'm trying to get stuff that you haven't seen five million times before in other fantasy-film magazines. I'm hoping to get more advance information than I've currently been able to do.

RUSS: And we're going to do great features like a tribute to Ray Harryhausen.

JOHN: Complete with an interview and sketches.

RUSS: And Bradbury on Harryhausen.

JOHN: It's a great stuff.

TONY ISABELLA'S BIGGEST DREAM

TONY: My biggest dream is to once again see *ATTACK OF THE CRAB MONSTERS*, which is a movie I only saw once and has stayed with me the rest of my life.



FOOM: How about expounding on your theory, a comic books as self-therapy.

STEVE: As self-therapy? Some of the recent issues have been written about subjects which have bothered me. The story about the fat kid in *GIANT-SIZE MAN-THING #4* had a lot to do with my personal experience of growing up. Edmond's family experiences were all fictionalized. Almost everything else was true. All the school experiences were things that came out of my own past. Except I didn't die. That happened to another kid. It's true. That was based on an actual incident. It's not so much therapy, exactly. I guess it is, in a way. It's a means of getting out rage. The trouble is, that when you let it just become therapy it sometimes weakens the story on the whole. I don't like the last chapter of that story, where Man-Thing comes into the gym and basically tears everyone limb-from-limb. It came out as pure revenge. While I think it had some exciting visual things that made it good for the comic book medium, it was not a true ending for that particular story. The true ending to that particular story should have been that nothing happened. Alice read the manuscript to the kids, they said, "Maybe we'll print it, we'll see." She went back to the locker, put it away, and that's the end of the story. Nothing happened. There was an alternate end to the story, and that's what I did in the following issue.

FOOM: Speaking of that story. The one you just mentioned. She put the manuscript in the locker, and then they jumped her without looking in her locker. If they wanted the manuscript...

STEVE: They didn't know the combination of the lock. They didn't want to vandalize school property. They didn't mind beating up the girl, but they did not want to damage school property. That was actually what was going through my mind at that time. I felt that was a little extreme, too, to be perfectly honest. We talked about this before. The scene the way I had written it originally had her just on the floor of the gymnasium, encircled by Edmond's parents, the gym teacher, and these other people. I decided, basically for visual impact, to use something a little stronger than that—having her hang from those gym rings. I don't think that was exceptionally realistic any more than I think the rest of the story was realistic. The next two issues of *MAN-THING* were in a sense an apology for that story. An apology for myself. I

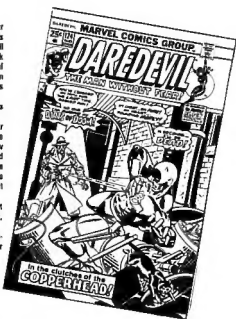
don't know what the readers are going to say. The other thing that could have happened as a result of Edmond's death was a severe reaction against the high school for all the wrong reasons. That's what happened to the book burning. The subsequent results, the death and rebirth of Man-Thing in issues 17 and 18. Those books were written about things I was concerned about but I think it becomes a problem when it really becomes therapy.

FOOM: It seems like everyone expects strange things from Steve Gerber.

STEVE: I read an interview with Denny O'Neil the other day and he said that the stories he didn't like were the ones he really didn't feel anything about. I don't know which stories those were. I think the same can be said about *MAN-THING*. It's become something more than the typical Marvel super-hero or monster book, if there is a typical book. It's something different, whatever that is. It has to be handled differently, in my opinion.

FOOM: We were talking to Herb and he was saying that books like *MAN-THING* couldn't have been done six, seven years ago at Marvel.

STEVE: Absolutely. For one thing, Marvel wasn't publishing any other than super-hero books then. For another



since he was brought in and trained basically by Roy and Stan. Everyone since then has changed the style a bit. Steve Englehart does something different; Don McGregor does something different. I do something different.

FOOM: Don't you feel that's good for the book?

STEVE: Definitely, yes. The other aspect is that the unified house style is good when you're publishing twelve books but when you're putting out forty new books a month and all of them read exactly the same, it would be death. I don't think that would help the books at all. The diversification is probably what keeps the line as vital as it is.

FOOM: The entire series of Man-Thing seems to be progressing. Do you have, somewhere in your mind, a final Man-Thing story, a final goal, or for Richard Rory?

STEVE: Well, what's going on with Richard Rory over the next couple of issues is going to boggle several minds. I don't want to give it away. The whole thing will be explained in issue #18. That issue will also be the start of a five-part series for the book, which is something which we haven't done for a long time. Korak and Jennifer will be back in the stories on a regular basis, possibly even the Duck here and there for a panel or two. Not really a return to weirdness, but something new. As for Richard Rory, he's definitely growing and changing. There's a character in the second half of the book burning who'll be out by the time this is published: Oliver's daughter, Carol Selby. She will be a regular in the series. It's charming. The relationship between them is going to be, if not a permanent thing, at least longer-lasting than anything he's had up to this point. But under very, very weird circumstances.

AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY THE SAME:
TONY ISABELLA ON DON MCGREGOR

TONY: Let me say one last thing about Don McGregor. Don shows in his work a tremendous capacity for using typing paper. Don is one of the truly great people in the world.

(Mary Wolfman walks by.)

TONY: Excuse me, I was just telling them how Don McGregor is one of my favorite people in the world. All told, if I had to pick one man to represent mankind, it would be Don McGregor.

MARY: If I go away, will you tell the truth?

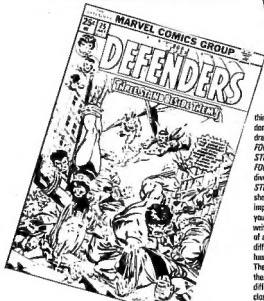
thing, those kind of books. I don't think, could have been done any where seven years ago. The world has changed dramatically since—

FOOM: We're not talking about the Code.

STEVE: I'm not talking about the Code either.

FOOM: We're talking about the Marvel style. It's not diversified into different voices.

STEVE: It is. There's a basic premise that the book should contain a certain amount of action. Visuals are important. Character development is important. When you had three people—Gary Friedrich, Roy and Stan—writing all the Marvel books, there was bound to be more of a unified style. Now we've got something like twelve different writers turning out books, and each one, I think, has brought something of his own to the Marvel style. There is still a very distinct and definite Marvel style, but there are different permutations of it. It's a little bit different, the very everyone does it. Gerry is probably the closest to the original Marvel style. He'll agree with that,



DOCTOR FOOM MEETS THE MUD-THING

STORY & ART - CHARLEY PARKER



I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT GETTING MY VERY OWN MONSTER FOR SOME TIME NOW. AFTER ALL, NO WELL-APPOINTED MAD SCIENTIST IS COMPLETE WITHOUT A MONSTER... THEY'RE VERY IN THIS YEAR.



AND WITH THE MUD-THING'S POWER UNDER MY CONTROL I'LL BE ABLE TO (DARE I SAY IT?) RULE THE WORLD! (OR AT LEAST MY BLOCK.) I'LL JUST SET THIS TRAP OUT AND... WHA?



YEECH!... MUD THING, I PRESUME. ME?... MAW! I'M A CHOCOLATE ELEPHANT AND I'M MELTING. HEY I'M NOT SUPPOSED TO TALK! STEVE GERBER WILL TAN MY HIDE FOR SURE IF HE CATCHES ME TALKING!!



OH YEAH? WELL THIS IS MY STRIP AND YOU CAN TALK IF I SAY SO!



NOW, GIMMIE THE DIRT... ER, I MEAN THE LOWDOWN ON THAT JAZZ ABOUT 'WHOSOEVER KNOWS FEAR BURNS AT THE MUD-THINGS TOUCH.' IS ALL THAT REALLY TRUE?



THAT? OH THAT'S A BUNCH OF MILLARKEY! I'LL SHOW YOU WHAT HAPPENS AT THE MUD-THINGS TOUCH...



SCHLURK!



YOU GET COVERED WITH SLIME - THAT'S WHAT!

FOR THIS I GOT UP THIS MORNING?

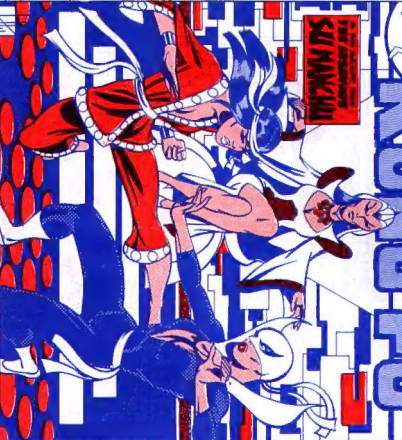


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